



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

MODERNISM MEDIATING THE COMING CATHOLICISM.

BY PROFESSOR CHARLES A. BRIGGS, DD., D.LITT.

MODERNISM still continues to agitate the Roman Catholic Church, and will continue its work until it accomplishes its Providential mission. It is, indeed, in some respects the most important religious movement since the great Reformation of the sixteenth century; for it is not confined to the Roman Catholic Church, but is world-wide in its sweep, influencing more or less all Christian Churches, and in a measure all the great religions of the world. Modernism is, essentially, the spirit of the modern age, and especially the resultant of the many forces which have been working with extraordinary complexity and intricacy during the previous century, and which are rapidly approaching a climax that probably will produce one of the greatest revolutions and reformations of history.

The battle between Modernism and the Papacy is raging all over the Christian world. The despotic attempts of the Curia to crush it have been vain. Some of the most eminent Catholic scholars have been put under the ban, others have been excommunicated; numbers have been suspended from their priestly functions. Many more have been removed from important positions of usefulness to other less important positions where it was supposed they could do little harm. Great numbers have been simply silenced. What does this all amount to, however, but attempts to smother a flame which still burns fiercely? The attempts to scatter it only increase the number of conflagrations.

There are signs that a reaction has already begun. Some of the most distinguished prelates of Italy, France and Germany have rebuked the most offensive spies and detractors of their brethren, whom this sad controversy has brought to the front.

Even the Pope is said to have uttered words of caution. The public press of the world is boiling with indignation because of the arrogant dictation, and impertinent interference with their affairs, of Monsignore Benigni, the protégé of Cardinal Merry del Val, and his "*Corrispondenza Romana*." There is profound dissatisfaction with the present situation of the Church all over the Christian world, and on the part of some of the most distinguished Cardinals and prelates. It is becoming more and more evident that the Pope has been systematically deceived.

The Pope, nominally the sovereign of the Church, is really now, as previous Popes have usually been, in the hands of a bureaucracy which in its own interests constantly misleads him in the most important matters. A simple-minded, devout man, with the best intentions for moral and religious reform, but without diplomatic experience and inexperienced in the detection of intrigues, he remains shut up in the Vatican, carefully guarded from all improper associations, courted by adoring pilgrims and obsequious officials. He does not, and cannot, know any more of the outer world than is strained out to him through the screens of a multitude of flatterers and self-seekers. The few candid and straightforward men who are admitted to brief interviews are drowned, as it were, in the ocean of flatterers, and the frank words of the Pope to these are always denied or explained away in the official journals. As Sabatier says, "One need not be a modernist to be ashamed of this *Camorra* who have practically substituted themselves for the person of the Pontiff, and are clamorously forcing their will upon the Church."

Russia and Turkey, and even Persia and China, have been compelled by the modern spirit to constitutionalize their Governments and so destroy bureaucracy and despotism. It is really impossible for Rome to resist much longer this modern spirit. Rome cannot long remain the only absolute despotism on the face of the earth. What the Roman Curia is now battling for is its own despotic authority. The real secret of its outcry against Modernism is the dread lest Rome may be compelled to tread the footsteps of all modern States.

The Pope has undoubtedly made great reforms, several of which were reported as on the way in my article on "Reform in the Catholic Church" in this REVIEW: such as the reform of public worship in the interests of reverence and dignity; the

reform of the Curia and the reorganization of its congregations to increase their efficiency; the consolidation of seminaries for the priesthood, and the enlargement and improvement of their studies; the removal of the American Catholics from a missionary jurisdiction to the direct Papal jurisdiction; and the recodification of the Canon Law which is about to be published. Few Popes have accomplished so much in a little time. And yet all these reforms have been in the interest of the government and discipline of the Church and in the direction of absolutism and Mediæval conceptions of the Papacy. The Pope has not carried out his programme of restoring all things in Christ. He has been diverted to the bureaucratic interest of restoring all things to the Papacy.

This Mediævalism in government and discipline has inevitably carried with it Mediævalism in doctrines of faith and morals, and so the conflict with Modernism became inevitable.

I. Mediating Modernism.—The Modernists in the Roman Catholic Church are Modernists in that they use modern methods in theology. They do not differ from Mediævalists in the doctrines of the Church, but only in the form and mode of stating them and vindicating them. Mediævalists insist that the scholastic form of the doctrine must be maintained as well as the doctrine itself. This is precisely the same conflict that has been in progress all over the Protestant world between Protestant scholastics and progressive Protestants, between those who insist that the scholastic formulas of the seventeenth century should be binding, as well as the doctrines contained in them. The Protestant scholastics and the Roman Curia see eye to eye in this fight. Progressive Protestants and Catholic Modernists are lined up in the same ranks. It is no longer a battle between Protestants and Roman Catholics.

(1) Modernists use the method of Biblical Criticism and accept its results without hesitation. This method destroys a number of false views of the Bible; but it affects no official doctrines of the Bible of any Church, Roman, Greek or Protestant. Scholastics, Roman and Protestant, agree in the new dogma of the inerrancy of every statement of Scripture which Modernists, Protestant and Roman Catholic, deny.

(2) Modernists study Church History by the methods of Historical Criticism. This destroys a multitude of untenable posi-

tions. We have to do here, not with the Roman Catholic doctrine of the use of apostolic tradition alongside of the Bible as an authority in religion, but with traditional history entirely apart from apostolic foundations. Scholastics, Roman and Protestant alike, insist on traditional history. All Modernists insist upon the elimination of historic fact from the traditional theories in which it is too often shrouded.

(3) Modernists study dogmas by the use of Modern Philosophy. Modern Philosophy discredits the scholastic formulas in which both Roman and Protestant dogmas are encased; it does not discredit the dogmas themselves, but endeavors to set them in modern formulas that can be understood by modern men.

(4) Modernists accept without hesitation the results of Modern Science. They usually adopt the principle of evolution, with its valuable consequences. Scholastics, Protestant and Roman, tend to the opinion, baldly expressed by the late Dr. Begg, that all Theology was given to Adam and Eve in Eden, or at least as a sacred deposit to the founders of Christianity. All Modernists see in Church History a development, or evolution of institution and doctrine.

(5) Modernists advocate a reform of the Church and its institutions in accordance with modern methods of government and discipline, and with scientific, social and economic principles. They practice the active rather than the passive virtues, and urge more comprehensiveness and efficiency in religious work. This involves practical reform all along the line. As the Encyclicle says: There is nothing that the Modernists would leave untouched. The scholastics, Protestant and Roman, are hostile to reform.

It is evident that Christianity has, in this conflict between Mediævalists and Modernists, entirely new lines of cleavage. The old lines have become indistinct, the new lines are rapidly obliterating them. What is that, but to say that both Protestantism and Roman Catholicism are moving onward, impelled by irresistible forces, to a future which not even the Pope can determine? Are they drifting to destruction? Or are they guided by the Master pilot to a safe and sure haven? Modernism is the embodiment of the spirit of our age, that our Lord is using to mediate between the past and the future of His kingdom.

Modernists differ greatly among themselves, whether Roman

Catholic or Protestant. There are radical Modernists who are impatient of the slow processes of scholarship and jump at conclusions. In their enthusiasm for the new, they become hostile to the old; and so they become revolutionary in their notions. Such Modernists discredit the movement. No one should blame the Pope for smiting them; no one should blame Protestant religious organizations for rejecting them.

Ecclesiastics have no fear of radicals, for they know that these are madly rushing to their own destruction; but they have an instinctive hatred of reform of any kind, and therefore conservative reformers are their terror, because they are conscious of the need of such reforms and know quite well that they can only postpone them. The Modernists, who have been smitten by the Roman Catholic and Protestant Churches alike, are for the most part, not radicals, but conservatives, differing from their adversaries more in methods and structural principles than in substance and ideals—more as regards current traditional opinion, than with reference to the official doctrines and institutions of the bodies to which they belong.

The attack of the ecclesiastics upon conservative Modernists, in every case, has strengthened the hands of the radicals and stayed the hands of those scholars who were mediating the reconciliation of the Church with the modern world, and the advance of the Church to a higher and better future, by the use of the more efficient methods of modern thought and modern life.

The battle that is raging all over the world is between Mediævalism and Modernism. Even the Protestant reactionaries are Mediævalists in part, because it is the mediæval scholastic methods for which they battle. It is the same battle over again which Mediæval men had to fight against the exaggerated claims for Antiquity; which each generation in a measure has to fight against the preceding generation which would hold it in bondage. The Middle Age of the world had its work to do, and in doing it would not be trammelled by the methods of Antiquity. Mediævalism conquered in its day, and has dominated the Roman Catholic Church, and in a measure Protestantism ever since. So the Modern Age of the world has its task, and it will perform it without being bound by the methods of the Mediævalists; a task vastly higher and greater than that of any previous time in the world's history; a task in which the entire world is in-

volved, and the entire universe must be held in view, and the entire history of the earth and man and the universe comes into play. Thomas Aquinas, with all his wondrous ability, his scholarly grasp of material and his constructive genius, was in many respects a babe to modern scholarship, whose horizon of knowledge is vastly more extended, whose material is enormously greater, and whose constructive system must be immensely higher, deeper, broader and wonderfully complex.

The tasks set before the modern world are not merely those of human enterprise and invention, they have been appointed by the Sovereign of the whole earth. The problems set before the Church of Christ in our day are problems which Jesus Christ our King has given us to solve. The divine Spirit is in the Church of to-day just as truly as He was in the ancient and mediæval Church, and He is guiding us in all our movements towards the ideal, predetermined from all eternity in the divine plan and purpose. Uzzah once more thinks he can stay the ark of God from falling. Thomas once more doubts the presence of his Lord. The ark of God will protect itself in this modern age just as surely as in the Ancient and Middle Ages. Thomas will eventually have to acknowledge his Lord in modern, no less than in ancient and mediæval, History.

Modernism is not the antithesis of Mediævalism. It is its normal resultant. The Encyclical makes them antithetical. I shall not deny that there are some who call themselves Modernists who do the same; but these men are not true Modernists. True Modernists are mediating Modernists. Modernism mediates the transition of the Middle Age of the world into the Future Age, just as the Middle Age mediated the transition of the Ancient into the Modern. All history is one, because it is governed by the Master Mind that created and governs the universe. All history advances steadily and surely towards its goal, as the militant Church becomes more and more triumphant. The chief Captain of our Salvation assures the modern world of an eventual victory. We may battle and suffer and die in confidence that the goal will be surely reached. Neither the reactionaries nor the revolutionaries will prevail. The Church of God moves onward with stately and invincible step into our future as into every preceding future, with the Lord's prayer, "Thy Kingdom Come," in its heart.

II. Coming Catholicism.—What is the Coming Catholicism? No one can tell in detail; but it is not difficult to determine in outline what the kingdom of God will eventually become, for we know in a measure at least the mind of our Lord, which is as certain of realization as the rising of the sun. We also know the great historic movements of the Church for nineteen centuries, and the forces which are now active in Christianity. These movements and forces, guided by the divine Spirit, will have resultants which we may discern with confidence.

(1) The Coming Catholicism will be a Church *at peace with itself*. Jesus said in his farewell discourse: "The Paraclete, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to remembrance all that I said unto you. Peace I leave unto you, My Peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be fearful." (John: xiv, 26-27.) A Church, guided by the divine Spirit, sins against the Master when it is fearful or troubled, and not at peace with itself. The guilt of this sin is the fundamental trouble with the Christian Church to-day. The peace of the Church should flow on as a river under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Instead of this, the Church of Christ has been too often "like the troubled sea; for it cannot rest, and its waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked." (Isaiah: lvii, 20-21.)

Why should the Christian Church be so fearful of errors in theology, so troubled with schisms, so much at war with itself as to questions of government, discipline and worship? The Truth is mighty and it will prevail. Facts are invincible. The Holy Spirit is the inerrant guide given us by our Saviour. Let truth and fact do their battle against error and theorizing. Above all, have confidence in the presence, the power and the guidance of the divine Spirit. The great fault of the Church of our day is that, while it holds to the doctrine of the divine Spirit, it does not act as if the divine Spirit was really present and guiding as Jesus promised. The Coming Catholicism will be a Catholicism which is conscious of the divine Spirit in her midst, which will act under His impulse and guidance, and which will be without fear or trouble, at peace with herself.

(2) The Coming Catholicism will be a *reunited Church*. The Church of Christ has never in fact altogether lost its unity. As

St. Paul tells us: "There is one body and one Spirit, even as also ye were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all." (Eph: iv, 4-6.) The Church of Christ is divided as a household, is divided with quarrelsome children; or as a nation is divided by warring factions. We have been so much occupied by our divisions that we have too often forgotten that we belong to the *one* household of God, the *one* kingdom of Christ. We have exaggerated the discord and depreciated the concord; we have misunderstood and misrepresented our brethren.

Several years ago, an eminent Waldensian in Rome said to me that there was not a single Roman Catholic scholar who understood the Waldensian position. I thought at the time that it would be difficult to find a Protestant scholar who understood altogether the Roman Catholic position. The Roman Catholics and the Protestants live in a different literary world, in a different religious atmosphere; and it is necessary for a Protestant to enter the Roman Catholic world, live in the Roman Catholic atmosphere, and so come into loving communion with his Roman Catholic brethren, in order to understand them. The Modernists, both Roman Catholic and Protestant, have in some measure this irenic spirit. They see that the consensus of the Church is vastly more important than the dissensus; that the consensus is the normal and legitimate inheritance of Christianity, but that the dissensus is, to a great extent, the crude, undigested and unwholesome encumbrance of Christianity which must either be cast off or revised or reformed. We may be certain that this dissensus will continue to decrease in importance.

As Harnack recently said: "Scholars in both Churches are engaged with marked independence in the solution of particular historical problems, and the value of their researches is recognized in both camps." A prominent Roman Catholic scholar, Monsignor Duchesne, the greatest living Church historian, recently published a Church History of the first three centuries, calmly discussing all disputed questions, such as the formation of the creeds, the Christological and Trinitarian controversies, the origin of the Episcopate and the Roman Primacy, and the history of the New Testament Canon; and, "with the exception of a few details," as Harnack says, nothing in this work can call forth the criticism of Protestant savants.

Harnack rightly urges upon conscientious men in both Churches the following admirable principles: (*a*) The confessional, or credal, differences of the two Churches, must be entirely removed from the political sphere. (*b*) Each party must try to be perfectly just to the other. (*c*) All useless controversies must be avoided and a fair and honest method of controversy instituted. (*d*) Each Church must earnestly try to appreciate and properly understand the religious and spiritual life of the other. (*e*) A higher unity, and the attainment of a truth which now lies beyond the grasp of both Churches, must be held up as the final ideal.

The faithful application of these principles in Christian brotherhood will eventually accomplish the Reunion of Christendom.

(3) The Coming Catholicism will be Catholic. The principles of Catholic Unity clearly manifest in the second Christian century are a normal and inevitable development of Apostolic Christianity. They have always been maintained by the Church, and will be even more dominant in the future than in the present. The great Catholic principles, as I have elsewhere shown, embrace these three things: (*a*) A consciousness of geographical unity in one Church spread throughout the world; (*b*) Historical unity by succession with the Apostles—this involves that nothing shall be regarded as Catholic that cannot be derived as a normal development of the Apostolic Church; (*c*) Vital or mystic unity with Christ—this involves that Christian life and worship, as instituted by the historic Christ, and maintained by union with the reigning Christ, shall be conserved as making the Church truly holy; in other words, the Catholic Church must be holy and apostolic, and so truly Catholic.

Now, all the great historic Churches of Protestantism, as well as the Roman, Greek and Oriental Churches, hold to these Catholic principles in theory; but in fact they all, without exception, sin against them in practices which are not in accord with these Catholic principles. They err by excess and by defect. The Church of the future will recede from these excesses, and overcome these defects, and so become more truly Catholic. In British Christianity, the Anglicans exaggerate apostolicity; the Puritans, sanctity; the Roman Catholics, geographical unity in the Holy See. What is excess in the one is defect in the others.

The three features of Catholic Unity are involved in the say-

ing of Vincent of Lerins: "*Quod ubique, quod semper, quod ab omnibus creditum est.*" This principle is universally recognized as valid; but in its application there is again excess on the one side and defect on the other. The Church all through its history has been impatient of results. It was determined to decide by Councils and Synods and Popes, rather than wait for the decision of the Holy Spirit. The fundamental Catholic principle is that the Holy Spirit will lead into all the truth; and that He will lead the universal Church into the possession of all the truth. The Church should always have waited until the divine Spirit had brought about the consensus, and not have forced the issue prematurely at the cost of discord, heresy and schism.

St. Augustine gave another phrase which has been of great significance here: "*Securus judicat orbis terrarum.*" It was this phrase, as quoted by Wiseman—"Therefore the entire world judges with security that they are not just who separate themselves from the entire world"—which made Newman a Roman Catholic. This principle is again correct, but the use made of it is often erroneous. It is quite true that the universal Church judges under the guidance of the divine Spirit, and in that judgment is at peace with itself, in unity with the divine Lord and the entire brotherhood; but it is not true that the individual Christian is bound to submit to the authority of the majority vote of a Christian Council, or of a Pope, unrecognized by the majority of Christians throughout the world.

The ecclesiastical authorities are always impatient for the decision, and are not content to wait until the divine Spirit has brought the world-wide Church to a knowledge of the truth and a conscientious acceptance of it. The ecclesiastics force the decision, and offend the consciences of a multitude of Christians as truly Christian as themselves. The Christian conscience rebels against a dogma that is forced upon it by external authority, without sufficient evidence to convince the intelligence. These ecclesiastics claim to themselves the possession of the divine Spirit, and deny it to brethren of equal rank, ability and piety with themselves. In such cases, the universal Church does not decide; and it certainly does not decide with security, in the possession of the Lord's peace and unity, but in strife and divisions entirely contrary to the principle of Catholic Unity. The time is coming when the true Catholic principle will reassert

itself, when it will be truly and calmly applied. The concord, the consensus, of Christendom will be recognized universally as the judgment of the divine Spirit, and the dissensus as an evidence that the divine Spirit has not yet given His decision through the universal Church.

4. The Coming Catholicism will be *orthodox*. The divine Spirit, though grieved, never abandons the Christian Church. In the midst of all the strife and discord, the heresies and schisms, He still continues His gracious guidance. The decisions of the ancient Councils give the standard of Christian orthodoxy from which the Church will never depart. These decisions were premature and, as the history of the Church shows, in every case ineffective. The doctrines did not win acceptance because of these decisions, but in spite of them, by the slow process of reflection and discussion in the Christian world. The Nicene faith hung in the balance for several generations, and only gradually, in spite of conciliar action, won the consensus of the Christian world. This ought to have taught the Christian Church a wholesome lesson, but it did not. The way of ecclesiastical authority has ever been the way the Church has preferred, at the cost of numberless heresies and schisms. The venerable proverb, "More haste, less speed," has been illustrated nowhere else more truly than in the history of Christian Councils.

At the same time, the wrath of man was overruled by God to His praise, and the decisions of the Christian Councils did eventually gain the consensus of the Church and will never be overruled. It is true that modern men take exception to the formulas in which the doctrines are expressed, and it is characteristic of Modernists that they are striving to set these doctrines in modern forms and expressions which will make them no longer abstractions, but realities to the modern world. This is one of the phases of the battle that is now raging between Modernists and Mediævalists. The Mediævalists maintain that the form of the doctrine is as necessary as its substance; that we must accept the philosophical formula as well as the Christian material. But Modernists rightly claim that the modern age of the world has its rights, no less than the mediæval and the ancient, that it is impossible for moderns to think, feel and act in the traditional moulds of former ages which are unfamiliar to modern experience. The letter of these doctrines is dead, the living substance

is wrapped in grave clothes. That these doctrines may live for us, these grave bands must be stripped off. Lazarus must come forth into the realities of the modern world. This is not to destroy the doctrines, it is rather to make them live again. It is not to bury them, but to raise them from the dead. It is not to substitute error and heresy for the doctrinal judgments of Christianity. It is to banish all error and heresy, due chiefly to misconceptions and misstatements of the theologians, by letting the pure, unadulterated, undefiled truth shine forth from the new candelabra upon which the ancient lamps of orthodoxy are now being placed.

(5) We might go down through the long highway of Christian History, and show that whatever has won the consensus of the Christian Church will always remain in the Christian Church, as a final judgment of the divine Spirit wrought out in the Christian experience of the universal Church; but I must haste to a conclusion. Which of the two great Christian bodies, Protestant or Roman Catholic, is to prevail in the future Catholicism? I do not hesitate to say: Neither. Both have their contributions to make to the Coming Catholicism. Whatever is genuine in Protestantism will pass over into the Coming Catholicism; whatever is not genuine will pass away. What is true and right in Roman Catholicism will abide; what is not altogether true and right will be thrown aside. Protestantism and Roman Catholicism will eventually rise above all the mists of prejudice, and the walls and citadels of ancient conflicts into the clear, bright heaven of eternal realities, and continue in a glorious brotherhood. Each, in its way, went through a crisis of reformation which has not yet reached its goal. Each, in its own way, is advancing towards a divinely appointed destination. Each has an important contribution to make to the Coming Catholicism, in which not only Protestant and Roman Catholic, but also Greek and Syrian, Armenian and Copt—yes, the Jew, the Mohammedan, and even India, China and Japan—will share; for in a world-wide religion, embracing all the races of mankind, every nation and every race will have something to say and something to do.

What, then, will be the great distinguishing principle of Coming Catholicism? It is the principle of sanctification by love. It must be evident to all that we have come into an ethical age, a sociological age; an age which resents mere dogma, and insists

upon the realities of life; which cannot be satisfied with faith only, but demands good works; an age for holy men and women; an age whose impulse can be no other than holy, Christlike, self-sacrificing love.

This age is not worse than others. It is better. The Church has always from the beginning been growing better. Christ, the Head of the Church, "also loved the Church and gave Himself up for it, that He might sanctify it, having cleansed it by the washing of water with the word, that He might present the Church to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." (Ephesians: v, 25-27.) We cannot doubt that our Lord has been, and is now, fulfilling His ideal. All History attests it, Christian experience manifests it, the ambition of multitudes of Christians throughout the world shows that, though the ideal has not yet been entirely accomplished, the advance towards it is more vigorous, more wide-spread, more determined and more effectual than ever before. Men are more and more convinced that nothing else but holy, Christlike love will solve the problems of the present age, and make the future what all men of good-will earnestly hope for. It alone will reconcile Christian to Christian, and bring about the peace and unity of the Church. It alone will give Christian thinkers and workers that liberty of conscience and opinion and practice which is indispensable to solve the hard problems inherited from the past, and those forced upon us by new conditions and circumstances in the present. It alone will reconcile Jew and Christian, for this is the ethical principle which binds Old Testament and New in indissoluble union: it is the everlasting *Shemah* of Jew and Christian alike. It alone will reconcile labor and capital, and solve the economic and industrial difficulties, with which the success of Christianity in our day is so inextricably involved. It alone will persuade the heathen world that Christianity is something more than the imposition of Western manners and customs, and an alien civilization, upon an unwilling Orient. It alone will knit together all nations and races in a Coming Catholicism which shall realize the highest ideals of Christianity.

CHARLES A. BRIGGS.